



Testimony to the Human Services Committee

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Chairs Moore and Abercrombie, Ranking members Berthel and Case, Vice-chairs Lesser and Leeper and honorable members of the Human Services Committee:

I want to thank you for this opportunity to testify on this important bill. I will say that Common Cause is a nonpartisan, non-profit citizens' lobby that has worked to improve the way Connecticut's government operates since 1971. We have 1.5 million members nationwide and more than 15,000 members and activists in Connecticut. Common Cause in Connecticut has a long history of working to increase transparency in government and advocating for the removal of the corrosive influence of special interest money in government and politics and election reform. **We support the following proposal:**

SB 284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS.

Connecticut is a small state but we have a population of over 3,600,000 individuals and we are a state of immigrants, as is much of the country. We benefit from the diversity of our population in terms of race, ethnicity, language and cultural diversity.

Our population groups include 5 Native American tribes, Black or African American, Asian including Chinese, Korean, Thai, Asian Pacific Islanders, Hispanic or Latino, and White as well as many individuals who identify as more than one group.

Health care benefits all residents of our state regardless of immigration status, age or gender. The idea that groups of residents can be divided into those afforded health care and those who do not is unacceptable and we need to work to make sure that

everyone is eligible and has access. Health care is not a product to be rationed or distribution controlled based on immigration status. Health care is a right to be afforded to all.

We strongly believe that SB 284 which expands access to HUSKY for all minors regardless of immigration status is an essential and needed step toward ensuring that CT's immigrant community has access to the health care they need and deserve. And we need to make sure that children will not age out at 9 years old leaving them and their families, will be left without healthcare. Healthy families need both children and their parents to have access to care.

In the long term, we need to ensure that all immigrants, including parents and adults, are able to have access to HUSKY and the health care they need. The state of Connecticut must create a comprehensive plan to expand HUSKY access to our whole immigrant community.

In this particular phase of the COVID Recovery we need to make the point that if we want Connecticut to recover from COVID-19, we must work toward ensuring that undocumented immigrants of all ages can access health care. Leaving undocumented parents and adults behind means leaving a large portion of essential workers on the frontlines of the pandemic behind.

We want healthy families and the best way to achieve that is to have healthy children and parents—but currently, we're leaving undocumented parents behind. Children do better when their parents do better.

We urge you to vote yes for SB 284.

Thank you